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LYON & LYON LLP
633 WEST FIFTH STREET
SUITE 4700
LOS ANGELES, CA 90071

EXAMINER

HUYNH, THU V

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2176

DATE MAILED: 12/26/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AO

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/545,316

Applicant(s)

ROSS ET AL.

Examiner

Thu V Huynh

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 October 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8-12,15,16,19,20,23 and 24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8-12,15,16,19,20,23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). 8.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: amendment filed on 10/01/2001 to the application filed on 04/07/2000.
2. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24 are pending in the case. Claims 1, and 9 are independent claims.
3. Claims 2, 7, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, and 22 were canceled.
4. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24 were amended.
5. The rejections of claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maddison et al., "Peer review", copyright 1998, pages 1-3 in view of Pope et al., "Using the web for peer review and publication of scientific journals", September 1998, pages 1-10, and Mathews et al., "Electronic Management of the Peer Review Process", May 6-10, 1996, pages 1-21 has been withdrawn as necessitated by the amendment.
6. The rejections of claims 9-12, 15, 16, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pope et al., "Using the web for peer review and publication of scientific journals", September 1998, page 1-10, in view of Maddison et al., "Peer review", copyright 1998, pages 1-3, and Mathews et al., "Electronic Management of the Peer Review Process", May 6-10, 1996, pages 1-21 has been withdrawn as pursuant to the applicants' argument.
7. The objection of claims 3 and 4 are objected for allowable subject matter has been withdrawn as necessitated by examiner update search.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

9. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 23, which is dependent on claim 9, the use of “whereby a group of authors collaborate to co-author an article” is vague and indefinite, since claim 9 does not mention about “a group of authors collaborate to co-author an article”.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

(b) This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(e) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

11. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-12, 15, 19, 20, 23, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maddison et al. (hereinafter Maddison), “Peer review”, copyright 1998, pages 1-3 in view of Pope et al. (hereinafter Pope), “Using the web for peer review

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and publication of scientific journals”, September 1998, pages 1-10, Mathews et al.

(hereinafter Mathews), “Electronic Management of the Peer Review Process”, May 6-10,

1996, pages 1-21, and Walker et al. (hereinafter Walker), U.S. 5,862,223 filed 07/1996.

Regarding independent claim 1, Maddison teaches the steps of:

- assigning a qualified reviewer to the article (Maddison, page 2, lines 20-23, teaches that the step of assigning reviewers to review the article based on the reviewers' expertise and the subject of the article).
- providing an evaluation form to the reviewer (Maddison, page 2, lines 26-28).
- receiving a completed evaluation form from the reviewer (Maddison, page 2, lines 27-29 and 33, teaches “the reviewer typing comments ... evaluation form” and “the comments furnished by the reviewer are passed along to the author”).
- providing the completed evaluation form to the author (Maddison, page 2, lines 27-29 and 33, teaches “the reviewer typing comments ... evaluation form” and “the comments furnished by the reviewer are passed along to the author”).
- receiving a response from the author (Maddison, page 2, lines 36-39, teaches that the author responses to the reviewers).
- providing the completed evaluation with author responses to an editor (Maddison, page 2, line 33 – page 3, line 1, teaches that the editors consider the author response).
- receiving a publication decision from the editor (Maddison, page 2, line 27 – page 3, line 5, teaches that the editor examines the evaluation form to decide the result for the article).

However, Maddison does not explicitly teaches that how the author responses to the

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reviewers evaluation form.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have appreciated that the author responses to the reviewers evaluation form “directly in the completed evaluation form” to facilitate the peer review process, since the reviewers and authors are able to use the evaluation form to communicate to each other.

However, Maddison does not disclose the steps of receiving an article from an author via a communication network; providing the publication decision to the author and the reviewer; querying a database of potential reviewers to determine a qualified reviewer.

Pope teaches the steps of:

- receiving an article from an author via a communication network (Pope, page 2, lines 1-4 from the bottom, teaches the step of using the network to submit an article to a journal).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Maddison and Pope to make Maddison’s peer review process on-line, as Maddison disclosed “Reviews are usually conducted on-line” (page 2, line 27), as Pope disclosed “made it possible to conduct the entire peer-review process on-line” (page 1, lines 4-5).

However, Pope does not teach the step of providing the publication decision to the author and the reviewer; querying a database of potential reviewers to determine a qualified reviewer.

Mathews teaches the step of:

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- providing the publication decision to the author and the reviewer (Mathew, page 7, lines 25-36, teaches that the publication decision is inform to the author via email, and the reviewers can examine the report of the decision).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Mathews and Maddison and Pope to provide the announcement of the result for the authors as well as the reviewers, since in the business practice, both the reviewers and the authors are people who expect the result.

However, Mathews does not teach the step of querying a database of potential reviewers to determine a qualified reviewer.

Walker teaches the step of:

- querying a database of potential reviewers to determine a qualified reviewer (Walker, col.7, lines 32-61).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Walker's search program to identify qualified experts into Maddison, Pope, Mathews' peer review process to provide a way to find a qualified reviewer to review the article as Walker disclosed "a simple way for users to find qualified experts to give them professional advice" (Walker, col.7, lines 1-5).

Regarding dependent claim 3, which is dependent on claim 1, Maddison, Pope, Mathews and Walker teach the limitations as explained above. Walker teaches that the qualified reviewer is determined according to availability and past performance, including, experience,

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availability criteria, response time, prior work history, skill sets, prior work history (Walker, col.14, line 66 – col.15, line 7; col.17, lines 44-53; and col.41, claim 3).

Walker does not explicitly state “timeliness, thoroughness, clarity, and the number of completed reviews” criteria are use to determine the qualified reviewer.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Walker’s criteria for a qualified expert which includes “timeliness, thoroughness, clarity, and the number of completed reviews” because Walker’s criteria for a qualified expert, such as “response time, experience, skill sets, and prior work history” suggest “timeliness, thoroughness, clarity, and the number of completed reviews” criteria becomes conditions for searching an expert for reviewing a particular article.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Walker and Maddison to find a potential reviewer among others to review the particular article, since it would have provide proper evaluation for the article.

Regarding dependent claim 5, which is dependent on claim 1, Maddison, Pope, Mathews and Walker teach the limitations as explained above. Refer to the rationale relied to reject claim 1, in which “receiving comments entered directly into the evaluation form” is addressed.

Regarding dependent claim 6, which is dependent on claim 1, Maddison, Pope, Mathews

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and Walker teach the limitation of claim 1 as explained above. Pope also teaches the steps of:

- automatically reformatting the article into a standard format (Pope, page 3, lines 1-27, teaches that the software “mounts an HTML version of the complete article”).
- presenting the final version article to the author for approval (Pope, page 7, lines 7-9).

However, Pope does not explicitly disclose presenting the *reformatted article* to the author for approval.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have including the step of presenting the reformatted article to the author for approval in a peer review process because Pope teaches presenting the *final version article* to the author for approval, which suggests the reformatted article is also approved by the author to reduce mistakes or any improper from the reformat process.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Pope into Maddison, Mathews and Walker to make Maddison’s peer review process on-line applicable to any type of journal publication, since “reformat into a standard format” would have helped different kind of journals converts the submitted article to satisfy the format requirements.

Regarding dependent claim 8, which is dependent on claim 1, Maddison, Pope, Mathews and Walker teach the limitations as explained above. Refer to the rationale relied to reject claim 1, the step of “informing the author of the publication decision by email” is addressed.

Regarding independent claim 9, Pope teaches the steps of:

- receiving an article from an author via a communications network (Pope, page 2, lines 1-4 from the bottom, teaches the step of using the network to submit an article to a journal).
- receiving an agreement from one or more qualified reviewers (Pope, page 5, lines 1-4, teaches the software keeps track of “who has agreed to review” and “who has not yet responded the request”, which implies one or more qualified reviewers responses the request for agreement).
- contacting each qualified reviewer and requesting that the qualified reviewer agree to review the article (Pope, page 5, lines 1-8, teaches the software contacts the required number of reviewers).

Pope does not teach the steps of providing an evaluation form to the accepting qualified reviewer; receiving a completed evaluation form from the accepting qualified reviewer; providing the author with the completed evaluation form; receiving a response from the author; providing the completed evaluation form with author response to an editor; and receiving a publication decision from the editor.

Maddison teaches the steps of:

- providing an evaluation form to the accepting qualified reviewer (Maddison, page 2, lines 26-28).
- receiving a completed evaluation form from the accepting qualified reviewer (Maddison, page 2, lines 27-33, teaches that the qualified reviewer is able to enter

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comments into an evaluation form online in the webpage and “the comments furnished by the reviewer are passed along to the author”).

- providing the author with the completed evaluation form (Maddison, page 2, lines 27-33, teaches “the reviewer typing comments ... evaluation form” and “the comments furnished by the reviewer are passed along to the author”).
- receiving a response from the author (Maddison, page 2, lines 36-39, teaches that the author responses to the reviewers).
- providing the completed evaluation form with author response to an editor (Maddison, page 2, line 33 – page 3, line 1, teaches that the editors consider the author response).
- receiving a publication decision from the editor (Maddison, page 2, line 27 – page 3, line 5, teaches that the editor examines the evaluation form to decide the result for the article).

However, Maddison does not explicitly teaches that how the author responses to the reviewers evaluation form.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have appreciated that the author responses to the reviewers evaluation form “directly into the evaluation form” to facilitate the peer review process as well as to simplify the communication between the reviewers and the authors, since all the reviewers and authors are able to access to the evaluation form.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

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invention was made to have combined the teaching of Maddison to Pope to provide the advantages of peer review process online, since both Maddison and Pope's purpose is "conduct the entire peer review process online" as Pope disclosed on page 1, lines 5. As Maddison disclosed "Reviews are usually conducted on-line" (Maddison, page 2, lines 26).

However, neither Pope nor Maddison teach the steps of providing the publication decision to the author and the reviewer; searching a database of potential reviewers; and generating a ranked list of qualified reviewer.

Mathews teaches the step of:

- providing the publication decision to the author and the reviewer (Mathew, page 7, lines 25-36, teaches that the publication decision is inform to the author via email, and the reviewers can examine the report of the decision).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Mathews into Pope to provide the announcement of the result for the authors as well as the reviewers, since in the business practice, both the reviewers and the authors are people who expect the result.

However, Mathews does not teach the steps of searching a database of potential reviewers; generating a ranked list of qualified reviewer.

Walker teaches the steps of:

- searching a database of potential reviewers (Walker, col.7, lines 32-61; col.17, lines 43-45; and col.20, lines 32-35, teaches searching the database to generate a list of qualified reviewers).

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- generating a ranked list of qualified reviewers (Walker, col.25, lines 35-44, teaches displaying a rated list of qualified expert, “expert qualification levels is display ... Once a level of expertise has been selected ... a list of expert Ids is display ... rating for that expert may be available).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Walker’s teaching into Pope, Maddison, and Mathews’ teaching to provide “a simple way for users to find qualified expert to give them professional advice” (Walker, col.7, lines 3-4) as well as to improve peer review process’ by generating “a prioritized list of potential reviewers” as Pope disclosed on page 4, lines 8-10.

Regarding dependent claim 10, which is dependent on claim 9, Pope, Maddison, Mathews and Walker teach the limitation as explained above. Refer to the rationale relied to reject claim 9, in which “the accepting qualified reviewers complete the evaluation form online” is addressed. As Pope disclosed “made it possible to conduct the entire peer-review process on-line” (Pope, page 1, lines 4-5).

Regarding dependent claim 11, which is dependent on claim 9, Pope, Maddison, Mathews and Walker teach the limitation as explained above. Mathews teaches that each accepting qualified reviewer for an article has access to completed evaluation forms of other accepting qualified reviewers after submitting an evaluation form for the same article (page 13, lines 1-5 from the bottom, Mathews teaches the reviewers are able to access to the Web site to update the reviews or examine submissions).

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It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Mathews and Pope to provide the reviewers a level degree access, such as the reviewers are able to access other review forms.

Regarding dependent claim 12, which is dependent on claim 9, Pope, Maddison, Mathews and Walker teach the limitation as explained above. Maddison teaches that each accepting qualified reviewer have the option of revealing their identity or not to the author (page 2, lines 23-26).

Maddison does not explicitly teach that each reviewer can “set access privilege for a section of the reviewer’s completed evaluation form”. However, the ability to “set access privilege for a section of the reviewer’s completed evaluation form” would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, in view of Maddison, because Maddison teaches that the reviewers have “option of revealing their identity” or not to the authors, which suggest the ability to set any type of confidential information should be protected in order to evaluate the article to the author, providing integrity of work.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Maddison and Pope to increase the accuracy of the information presented in the article, protect the reviewers privacy and objectivity, since “setting confidential for sections of the reviewer’s completed form” would have helped the reviewers openly evaluate the article.

Regarding dependent claim 15, which is dependent on claim 9, Pope, Maddison,

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Mathews and Walker teach the limitation of claim 9 as explained above. Pope also teaches that reformatting the article into a standard format (page 3, line 1-27, Pope teaches that the software “mounts an HTML version of the complete article”).

Regarding dependent claim 19, which is dependent on claim 9 Pope, Maddison, and Mathews teach the limitation of claim 9 as explained above. Pope teaches that the article iterates through the peer review process until the article is approved for publication (page 1, lines 1-10).

Regarding dependent claim 20, which is dependent on claim 19 Pope, Maddison, and Mathews teach the limitation of claim 19 as explained above. Pope teaches that after the article has been approved for publication, further comprising the steps of:

- creating a galley proof of the article (Pope, page 7, lines 4-10).
- providing the galley proof of the author (Pope, page 7, lines 4-10).
- receiving an approval of the galley proof from the author (Pope, page 7, lines 4-10).
- immediately publishing the article in electronic format (Pope, page 7, lines 4-10).

However, Pope does not teach proving the galley proof to the *editor* for an approval.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included the step of proving the galley proof to the editor for an approval before publishing the article to increase the accuracy of the information presented in the article, since both the author and the editor are people who has knowledge/experience with the article. As Pope disclosed, “Once the reviews are submitted, the subject editors has made a recommendation” (Pope, page 6, line 11).

Regarding dependent claim 23, which is dependent on claim 9, Maddison, Pope, Mathews and Walker teach the limitations as explained above. Maddison teaches peer review process in which authors work on a book (Maddison, page 1, lines 10-17).

However, Maddison does not teach receiving a co-authored article via communications network.

Pope teaches receiving an article from an author via a communication network (Pope, page 2, lines 1-4 from the bottom, teaches the step of using the network to submit an article to a journal).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Maddison and Pope to facilitate the peer review process when the big project, such as journal or Madison's book is working on, which need many author's knowledge, since the entire Maddison's peer review process on-line, the co-authors are more convenient to contact each other as well as submit a part of article or respond to the reviewers.

Regarding dependent claim 24, which is dependent on claim 23, Maddison, Pope, Mathews and Walker teach the limitations as explained above. Maddison teaches that authors respond to the evaluation form (Maddison, page 2, lines 34-39), which implies "each co-author responds to each evaluation form".

However, Maddison does not explicitly teaches that how the author responses to the evaluation form.

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It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have appreciated that the author responses to the reviewers evaluation form “directly into the evaluation form” to facilitate the peer review process as well as to simplify the communication between the reviewers and the authors, since all the reviewers and authors are able to access to the evaluation form.

12. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pope, Maddison, Mathews, Walker as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Sato et al. (hereinafter Sato), U.S. 6,212,517 B1 filed 06/1998.

Regarding dependent claim 4, which is dependent on claim 3, Pope, Maddison, Mathews, and Walker teach the limitation of claim 3 as explained above. Sato teaches the steps of:

- generating a ranked list of keywords related to a selected document/text (Sato, col.1, lines 9-11 and 53-61; and col.8, lines 16-20).
- providing the list of keywords to the user (Sato, col.1, lines 9-11, “providing a list of keywords ranked”).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have applied Sato’s teaching into Pope to provide keyword information to the author as Pope disclosed “create ... keywords ... information ... for use in messages to authors” (Pope, page 3, lines 23-24).

However, Sato does not disclose the step of receiving an approval of the ranked list from the author.

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Pope teaches the step of:

- receiving an approval of the *final version article* from the author (Pope, page 7, lines 7-9).

However, Pope does explicitly disclose receiving an approval of the *ranked list* from the author.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have including the step of presenting the *ranked list* of keywords to the author for approval in a peer review process because Pope teaches presenting the *final version article* to the author for approval, which suggests the *ranked list* is also approved by the author to reduce mistakes or any improper from ranking process.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Pope into Maddison, Mathews and Walker to make Maddison's peer review process on-line more accurate, since both system and author agree the article content based on ranked list of keywords.

13. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pope, Maddison, Mathews, Walker as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Sato and Sumner et al. (hereinafter Sumner), "Open Peer Review & Argumentation: Loosening the Pager Chains on Journals", September 1996, page 1-10.

Regarding dependent claim 16, which is dependent on claim 9, Pope, Maddison,

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Mathews, and Walker teach the limitation of claim 9 as explained above. Refer to the rejection of claim 9, in which “searching the database to generate a list of qualified reviewers” is addressed.

Sumner teaches that “Sometimes, automated systems are in place for matching reviewers with submission based on keyword analysis” (Sumner, page 2, lines 3-4), which implies the step of parsing the article, such as the title, abstract, and text content to find article’s keywords for matching the reviewer records.

However, Sumner does not teach the step of ranking the list of keywords according to their relative weight in describing the content of the article.

Sato teaches the step of ranking the list of keywords according to their relative weight in a selected document/text (Sato, col.1, lines 19-11 and 53-61; and col.8, lines 16-20).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Sato’s teaching into Sumner to provide more clearly the main content of the submitted article, since article’s keywords are provided “in order of importance”.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Sumner and Sato’s teaching to Pope and Maddison’s teaching to provide an automatically selection of potential reviewers to review the particular submitted article based on the keywords which are parsed from the submitted article, as Maddison disclosed “ the major criterion for the selection of potential reviewers is their scholarly expertise as demonstrated by their publication record on the organisms represented on the page to be reviewed” (Maddison, page 2, lines 21-23). As Pope disclosed on page 3, lines 17-25,

“create ASCII versions of acknowledgments, abstract, keywords, ...” after the authors submit their articles.

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-6, 8-12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

- Applicants argue claims 1 and its independent claims 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, claim 1 has been amended to include the step of “querying a database of potential reviewers to determine a qualified reviewer”. Applicants argue that in claim 9, Maddison in view of Pope does not teach that a database of potential reviewers is queried to determine a qualified reviewer because the editor-in-chief chooses the reviewers.

Examiner agrees that Pope does not teach database of potential reviewers is queried to determine a qualified reviewer. However, it is noted that the editor-in-chief chooses the *editors*, not the *reviewers*. As explained in the rejections claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8, above, the combination of Pope in view of Maddison, Matthews, and Walker teaches this feature (see page 1, paragraph 11). As explained in the rejections of claim 4 above, the combination of Maddison in view of Pope, Matthews, Walker, and Sato teaches this feature (see page 16, paragraph 12).

- Applicants argue claims 9 and its dependent claims 10-12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, and 24 Pope in view of Maddison and Mathews does not teach “the element of searching a database of potential reviewers”.

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Examiner agrees that Pope does not database of potential reviewers is queried to determine a qualified reviewer. As explained in the rejections of claims 9, 10-12, 15, 19, 20, 23, and 24 above, the combination of Pope in view of Maddison, Matthews, and Walker teaches this feature (see page 3, paragraph 11). As explained in the rejections of claim 16 above, the combination of Maddison in view of Pope, Matthews, Walker, Sumner, and Sato teaches this feature (see page 17, paragraph 13).

Conclusion

15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Schaeffer et al. (U.S. 5,446,842 issued 08/29/1995) teaches object-oriented collaboration system.

Saund et al. (U.S. 5,659,766 issued 08/19/1997) teaches method and apparatus for inferring the topical content of a document based upon its lexical content without supervision.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thu V Huynh whose telephone number is (703) 305-9774. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather R Herndon can be reached on (703) 308-5186. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7239 for regular

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communications and (703) 746-7238 for After Final communications, and (703) 746-7240 for Non-Official/Draft.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-9000.

TVH

December 14, 2001


JOSEPH H. FEILD
PRIMARY EXAMINER